

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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O R 110850Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO COMUSJAPAN FUCHU JAPAN IMMEDIATE

COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JAPAN IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1212

DOD WASHDC

AMCONSUL SAPPORO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII

COMFAIRWESPAC ATSUGI JAPAN

6921 SCTY WING MISAWA, JAPAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 4807

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR JA

SUBJ: P-3 OPERATIONS AT MISAWA

REF: A. TOKYO 3185

B. AMCON SAPPORO 110710Z APR 74

1. ON APR 4, 1974, DIRECTOR GENERAL AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU OKAWARA CALLED IN ACTING COMUSJAPAN AND POL/MIL COUNSELOR TO DISCUSS PROPOSED MOVE OF ONE-THIRD P-3 SQUADRON FROM IWAKUNI TO MISAWA. DFAA DIRECTOR GENERAL TASHIRO WAS ALSO PRESENT. BURDEN OF OKAWARA'S REMARKS WAS THAT MOVE OF P-3'S TO MISAWA, AS CURRENTLY PLANNED BY NAVY, WOULD CAUSE SERIOUS LOCAL PROBLEMS SINCE THE LOCAL COMMUNITY HAS NOT REPEAT NOT COMPLETELY ACCEPTED THE MOVE. OKAWARA SAID THAT ARRIVAL OF P-3'S BEFORE LOCAL POPULATION IS MOLLIFIED WOULD BE REGARDED BY THEM AS CHALLENGE, AND GOJ PREDICTS THAT LOCAL LEADERSHIP WOULD BE FORCED THEREBY INTO NON-COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE WITH GOJ AND US FORCES RESPECTING MISAWA. OKAWARA SAID THAT GOJ WISHES TO HAVE SUFFICIENT TIME

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PRIOR TO ANY SUCH MOVE TO COMPLETE GROUNDWORK AND QTE BEHIND-

THE-SCENES UNQTE DISCUSSIONS WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS TO WIN THEIR ACCEPTANCE. OKAWARA OUTLINED THREE MEASURES GOJ HAD IN MIND--
1) INCREASE OF GOJ FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO MISAWA CITY RESULTING FROM PASSAGE OF NEW LEGISLATURE NOW PENDING IN DIET. DFAA IS NOT YET CLEAR AS TO HOW SOON LEGISLATION WILL BE PASSED BUT FEELS THAT LEGISLATION WILL BE HANDLED BY DIET CLOSE TO END OF DIET SESSION, WHICH MAY LAST AS LONG AS END OF MAY; 2) U.S. AGREEMENT TO LIMITED CIVIL AIR USE OF MISAWA; 3) RELEASE OR JOINT USE OF PORTION OF LAND IN NORTH SECTION OF MISAWA BASE TO BE USED FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT. OKAWARA THEN EXPLAINED THAT, DURING OPERATION OF MISAWA BY AIR FORCE, LOCAL OFFICIALS HAD RECEIVED IMPRESSION FROM OFFICERS AT MISAWA BASE THAT US FORCES WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO LIMITED CIVIL USE OF AIRPORT AND TO RELEASE OR JOINT USE OF TRACT IN NORTHERN PART OF FACILITIES. THESE REQUESTS OF MISAWA COMMUNITY, THEREFORE, HAD NOT BEEN INVENTED RECENTLY IN REACTION TO NEWS OF IMPENDING P-3 MOVE; AND CITY OF MISAWA RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY HAD GOTTEN IMPRESSION THAT US FORCES WOULD BE ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE THESE REQUESTS. OKAWARA, THEREFORE, DESCRIBED RECENT INDICATIONS OF US ATTITUDES, WHICH HAVE BEEN GENERALLY NEGATIVE CONCERNING THESE TWO ISSUES, AS QTE AWKWARD AND EMBARRASSING UNQTE FOR GOJ.

2. DIRECTOR GENERAL TASHIRO SAID THAT HE HAD SPEND SEVERAL DAYS WITH MISAWA MAYOR AND CITY ASSEMBLYMEN IN JANUARY, AND THEY HAD DESCRIBED TO HIM AT THAT TIME THE GROWING NEGATIVE ATTITUDE IN MISAWA CITY ABOUT TRENDS OF USE OF MISAWA AIR BASE AND RIP-SAW BOMBING RANGE. TASHIRO SAID THAT A SUB-COMMITTEE OF CITY ASSEMBLY HAD BEEN WORKING ON A DRAFT RESOLUTION OPPOSING US FORCES USE OF RIP-SAW AND THAT GOJ FORESAW SERIOUS PROBLEM IF CONDITIONS WERE CREATED IN MISAWA TO STIMULATE PASSAGE OF THAT RESOLUTION.

3. ACTING COMUSJAPAN AND POL/MIL COUNSELOR UNDERTOOK TO EXAMINE SITUATION MORE CLOSELY WITH US FORCES AND TO RESPOND IN DUE COURSE TO GOJ RENEWED REQUEST.

4. AT EMBASSY REQUEST, AMCON SAPPORO CONSULSECTION MADE EXTENSIVE VISIT TO MISAWA CITY AND AOMORI PREFECTURE ON APR 8, 9, AND 10. HIS REPORT, TRANSMITTED REF B, CONFIRMS LOCAL ATTITUDES
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DESCRIBED TO US BY GOJ OFFICIALS IN TOKYO.

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY HAS LITTLE DOUBT THAT P-3 MOVE TO MISAWA AS CURRENTLY PROPOSED CARRIES WITH IT SUBSTANTIAL RISKS TO CONTINUED GOOD COMMUNITY RELATIONS BETWEEN US FORCES AND OFFICIALS OF AOMORI PREFECTURE; AND EMBASSY CONSIDERS THAT MAINTENANCE OF GOOD AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS THERE REMAINS IN US AND US FORCES LONG-TERM INTERESTS FOR CONTINUED OPTIMUM EXPLOITATION OF MISAWA

AIR BASE. ACCORDINGLY, IT SEEMS TO US THAT, UNLESS NAVY HAS REASONS IT CONSIDERS OVERRIDING OF THE CONSIDERATIONS OUTLINED ABOVE AND IN REF B, MOVE OF P-3 AIRCRAFT TO MISAWA SHOULD BE POSTPONED. WHILE TARGET DATE FOR MOVE CANNOT REPEAT NOT NOW BE SET WITH ANY CONFIDENCE, WE WOULD GUESS THAT MOVE SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE RESET PRIOR TO MID-JUNE, 1974. TARGET DATE OF MID-JUNE ALLOWS FOR PASSAGE OF PENDING LEGISLATION BY END OF MAY AND TWO WEEKS ADDITIONAL TIME FOR DFAA NEGOTIATIONS WITH MISAWA OFFICIALS OF NEW SUBSIDY BASED ON THAT LEGISLATION. MID-JUNE TARGET DATE ALSO WOULD ALLOW TIME FOR CONSIDERATION OF GOJ REQUESTS RESPECTING CIVIL AIR USE OF MISAWA AND RELEASE OF PARCEL IN NORTHERN SECTION OF BASE.

6. SHOULD NAVY DECIDE THAT ITS OPERATIONAL REASONS DO NOT REPEAT NOT OUTWEIGH PROBABLE LONG TERM RISKS TO US FORCES-COMMUNITY RELATIONS, AND CAN THEREFORE DELAY ITS MOVE, EMBASSY BELIEVES IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR EMBASSY TO INSIST TO GOJ THAT IT MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO GIVE PENDING DFAA LEGISLATION HIGHER PRIORITY IN DIET PROCEEDINGS.

7. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR REPLY AND COMMENTS ASAP.
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